

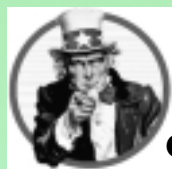
Meteor Heraut
Published by the USAG Benelux

Volume 24, Number 8

Chièvres - Schinnen - Brussels

April 21, 2006

Around USAG Benelux



Call to Duty

Boots on the Ground

The 231st U.S. Army Birthday Ball is set for June 24, at the SHAPE Club. A reception will kickoff the gala at 5:30p.m., followed by dinner and dancing. Soldiers of all ranks, retirees, Department of the Army Civilian employees, their family members and guests are invited to attend. Daycare service will be available at the SHAPE Child Development Center. For more information, contact your unit first sergeant or call DSN: 360-7533.

USAG Benelux

Logistical Excellence

HEIDELBERG, Germany - United States Army, Europe, and Installation Management Agency - Europe combined forces here Apr. 4, to honor the top logistics warriors who supply and maintain everything the Army needs to fight and win.

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux's Directorate of Logistics Supply Support Activity received honorable mention at the Army Awards for Maintenance Excellence, and Supply Excellence Awards which recognize the attention to detail, innovation and hard work of logistical units throughout USAREUR.

USAG Schinnen



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Two soldiers position a 'peanut' cement barrier block during a USAG Schinnen protection plan exercise April 3.

Benelux hosts IMA-E director

Benelux Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux hosted Russell Hall, director of Installation Management Agency-Europe last week.

Col. Dean Nowowiejski, commander of the USAG Benelux, gave Hall windshield tours of installations in each Benelux garrison and took a helicopter tour of port operations.

IMA-Euro staff received similar tours and worked with USAG Benelux counterparts to expand the working relationship between the two headquarters.

While Soldiers are fighting the Global War on Terrorism, installations and garrisons in the Army are transforming toward the future.

"The greatest challenge for our institution has been the reality that managing a garrison is a big business and has big implications for the quality-of-life for our soldiers, their families, their training and their ability to execute their mission," Hall said. "We have to make sure we take care of and safeguard those families with proper resources."

During his visit to USAG Brussels, Hall presented the Brussels Army Community Services team with its accreditation certificate.

The requirement for accreditation and the actual accreditation process is relatively new. Though one of the smaller ACS



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Russell Hall, director of Installation Management Agency-Europe greets Soldiers from the USAG Schinnen during his four-day visit last week to the USAG Benelux.

providers within IMA-E, the Brussels ACS was inspected in August, 2005, and, as a result, achieved Department of the Army accreditation that will remain valid for three years. It represents, as he noted, "Dedication to excellence and to service to your Community."

In addition to receiving a tour of the Garrison's facilities in Brussels, Hall met with representatives from the U.S. Mission to NATO and Deputy U.S. Military Representative Brig.

Gen. John Adams. The briefings addressed the joint and interagency nature of the community that USAG Brussels serves.

"For us at IMA-E, our soldiers and their families are already further deployed in CONUS and are then further deployed in combat AOR," Hall said. "Our garrisons have proven that they are very capable of, and enthusiastically will, accomplish their mission. I'm very proud of all the garrisons in USAG Benelux."

79th returns home



PHOTO: Cis Spook

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux community welcomed back members of the 79th Veterinary Detachment to Caserne Daumerie in Chièvres, Belgium after the unit spent last year providing support to Operation Enduring Freedom.

Members serving downrange include Maj. Kyle Richard, officer in charge, Capt. Stephanie Fonseca, Capt. Susie Seward, Staff Sgt. Richard Horne, Sgt. Michael Beard, Sgt. Randy Billings, Sgt. Antion Parker, Spec. Nicholas Darland, Spec. Belle Apaun-Molina, Spec. Sherene Powell, Spec. Jacob Roberts and Pfc. Mario Smith.



Secretary-General speaks to Model NATO

By Matthew Reimann

Brussels American School Senior

When NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer spoke about NATO's role in the future and addressed questions about key alliance issues on March 23, it wasn't in front of a room full of cameramen or professional journalists. Instead, the Secretary-General addressed students from five Benelux area high schools who were participating in the 29th Annual Model NATO program, a one-day simulation of NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC).

De Hoop Scheffer and Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission to NATO, John Koenig, were guest speakers at the event, which took place at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

Model NATO is sponsored by Brussels American School in close cooperation with the U.S. Mission to NATO. The event is similar to a Model United Nations (MUN) Conference, but requires students to research one of NATO's 26 member nations and write a communiqué (a proposal) which addresses an issue on the North Atlantic Council's agenda. Additionally, and unlike MUN, Model NATO has the added benefit of actually being held at the same venue as "the real thing."

"The small number of participants allows student-delegates a higher level of involvement than MUN at The Hague," says Chris Vahrenhorst, BAS teacher and Model NATO coordinator.

This year's conference featured 75 students from 19 different nations. Those attending were from AFNORTH High School, Brussels American School, the International School of Brussels, SHAPE International School, and St. John's International School.

Topics debated included NATO's participation in the Afghanistan Mission (International Security Assistance Force), relief/assistance in the Darfur region of Sudan, the Iraqi Military



PHOTO: Thad Moyseowicz

NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer speaks to students across the Benelux during the 29th Annual Model NATO Program.

Training Missions, development of a NATO Response Force, and NATO's role in the apprehension of war criminals still at-large. The theme of this year's conference was "Solidarity for Democratic Values."

The secretary-general echoed this theme at the end of his remarks. He urged the students to take the message with them that NATO is an "alliance based on democratic values."

"It was an honor to hear him (de Hoop Scheffer) speak," said Stephen Wilson, a senior at BAS. "I've lived in Belgium for nine years, and this was my first time hearing the secretary-general speak."

"This is the second year in a row that the secretary-general has addressed our Model NATO students," says Vahrenhorst. "His personal inter-

est in these students will go a long way toward spreading the word about this Alliance's continuing importance in today's world."

Lively debate was monitored by Logan Quinn of BAS, Kacie Kappenman and Trish Putmann of SHAPE, and Joshua Kapp of ISB, all of whom role-played de Hoop Scheffer's North Atlantic Council role as co-chairs.

When the day was finished, student-delegates passed two of eight communiqués presented. Model NATO accurately replicates NATO by requiring consensus.

All agreed documents require all member nations to have voted unanimously in their favor - a principle integral to NATO's success and strength. Participating students were able to experience first-hand the difficulties- and

satisfaction- of consensus-building.

"Model NATO was a great experience," says sophomore Brianna Fitch of BAS. "It gave me a feel for being a diplomat in a real-life environment. It was a unique experience, and I'm glad I was able to participate and learn more about NATO."

In addition to the simulation, students from BAS and SHAPE attended a half-day briefing on March 9th to prepare themselves for the debate. Carl Hale, deputy director of Operations and Programs at the U.S. Mission, organized a lineup which included guest speakers from the U.S. Mission and the international military staff.

"We were very fortunate again to have so many volunteer their time for the students," says Vahrenhorst. "It's a rare opportunity for the kids."

Procrastinators can file household goods claims after 2 years

Northern Law Office

The Army may only pay your claim for damage to, or loss of, personal property incident to service if you present it in writing within two years after the claim accrues. For household goods claims, the two-year period begins on the date of delivery.

There is no authority to waive this rule. The law does not authorize the Army to compensate you after the two-year statute of limitations has elapsed. That does not mean, however, that you may not receive compensation from the carrier.

As the property owner, you may seek reimbursement for loss or damages directly from the carrier.

Carriers that transport property under a government bill of lading must process claims up to six years after the discovery of the property's loss or damage. You should file any claim against the carrier promptly. In order to file a claim directly against the carrier, you must give the carrier timely notice of all items that were lost or damaged.

This is done by listing the items on the DD Form 1840 on the day of delivery or on the DD Form 1840R (reverse side of the 1840 form) within 70 days of delivery. These forms must be submitted to your Army claims office.

Because the Army pays timely, meritorious claims,

direct claims against carriers are rare. Carriers are accustomed to communicating with the government, not the claimant.

A carrier may attempt to deny a claim, citing failure to file with the Army within the standard two-year limit. Should a carrier tell you this, be advised that the two-year statute of limitations applies only to claims filed against the government, not those filed directly against private carriers.

For more information, please contact claims personnel at The Northern Law Center, Bldg. No. 318 on SHAPE, or call DSN 423-4195 or commercial 065/44.41.95.

B-17 'Royal Flush' still remembered



PHOTO: Courtesy Eric Daniel

Lt. Col. Peter D. Giusti, commander of the 309th Airlift Squadron, members of the squadron based at Chièvres, Alderman Dumont and residents of Fouleng pay their respect April 13 to the crew members of the downed B-17 "Royal Flush" at Fouleng, Silly.

On 13 April 1944, the Royal Flush returned from a raid over Germany and was heading back to England when the plane was hit by German anti aircraft defense based on Chièvres Air Base. Six of the 10 crew members died in the explosion of the plane and four, among which one injured, were able to bail out.

Belgian resistance fighters were able to bring three of them to safety. The injured airman was captured and sent to a hospital. A couple of months later, he was sent to a prisoners' camp. Four local witnesses of the crash attended the ceremony at the commemorative plaque that was made by one of them on a nearby farm.

Cell phone road rules apply on, off-post

By Robert Szostek

USAREUR Office of the Provost Marshal

Hand-held phones are safety hazards that have caused many road accidents in Europe. For that reason, the Department of Defense and most European nations have banned the use of hand-held cell phones while driving a motor vehicle.

"These laws are enforced on and off U.S. installations throughout Europe," said Lt. Col. Deborah K. Anderson, chief of law enforcement operations at the United States Army, Europe office of the provost marshal.

"Studies show that mobile phone use in cars is unsafe," she explained. "Driving safely is a complex task and requires total concentration. Phoning distracts drivers and any distraction can make you miss hearing or seeing the cues needed to avoid a crash."

Anderson said it is best to switch off the phone as soon as entering the car, but added that people who want to communicate while driving can:

☐ Buy a "hands free" device that allows the driver to keep both hands on the steering wheel. The device can also be distracting, so short duration calls are recommended.

☐ Use the voice mail box function and call people back when finished driving.

"It is OK if people use a hand-held phone in a vehicle if it is safely parked and the engine is off," Anderson said. "However, penalties for having a cell phone in your hand or wedged between your head and shoulder while driving, even in slow moving traffic, are severe."

Here's a partial list of fines:

- ☐ Belgium - fines from •50 to •1,375.
- ☐ Germany - a •40 fine and one point against your license.
- ☐ Italy - fines from •68 to •275.
- ☐ Luxembourg - fines up to •74.
- ☐ Netherlands - minimum fine is •140, maximum is two months in prison or a •2,000 fine.

☐ Department of Defense - DOD policy is to assess three points against your license for on-post violations.

"People will suffer heavier penalties and can even lose their license if they caused an accident or were involved in one while using a cell phone improperly," Anderson added.

More information is available at www.per.hqusaureur.army.mil/services/safetydivision/main.htm.

About the Meteor-Heraut

The *Meteor-Heraut* is an authorized unofficial civilian enterprise newspaper published for the U.S. Army under AR 360-1 for U.S. military personnel in the Benelux nations under exclusive agreement between the USAG Benelux and AdvantiPro GmbH of Kaiserslautern, Germany, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense. Editorial content is provided by public affairs offices of the USAG Benelux, USAG Schinnen and USAG Brussels. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the USAG Benelux. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the DOD, the Department of the Army, or AdvantiPro GmbH of the products or services advertised.

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The *Meteor-Heraut* is published twice per month. Circulation is 5,000. Our mailing address is Meteor-Heraut, USAG Benelux, Unit 21419, Public Affairs Office, APO AE 09708. Telephone: (0032) 068-27-5419/DSN 361-5419; fax: DSN 361-5106. Email address: meteor@benelux.army.mil

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- We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
- Submit articles in plain text and separate photographic files, but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor.
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Copy and photographs are due by noon 11 calendar days before publication date.

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Meteor-Heraut Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy is due at noon

Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date
Apr. 24	May 5	May 22	June 2	July 3	July 14	July 31	Aug. 11
May 8	May 19	June 5	June 16	July 17	July 28	Aug. 14	Aug. 25

Chièvres Garrison...serving SHAPE/Chièvres communities

Community Notes

Celebrate Freedom's Warriors at Signal Ball

Fifth Signal Command hosts the 2006 European Regimental Signal Ball at the Patrick Henry Village Pavilion May 20 at 5 p.m.

Tickets are on sale now for \$35 and can be purchased online at www.2006europesignalball.com until May 1. Come celebrate freedom's warriors and the 146th birthday of the Signal Corps.

The event is open to all Soldiers, civilians and family members.

For more information, call DSN: 385-2213 or Civ: 0621-730-2213.

Iron Shapian

The SHAPE Battalion is hosting an Iron Shapian contest April 28 at the SHAPE Main Gym. The competition includes push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, dips and a four-mile run. Call DSN: 423-3766 for more information.

Summer hire program

The Civilian Human Resources Agency, Europe (CHRA-E) is accepting applications for the 2006 Summer Hire program for jobs starting June 26 through Aug. 4.

Requirements: Summer Hire is open to family members between the ages of 14 and 22 years old.

❑ Participants must be unmarried family members of an active military member or Department of Defense civilian who will turn age 14 by June 26, and cannot reach their 23rd birthday prior to the end of the program on Aug. 4.

❑ Summer Hires for child development positions must be 16 years old.

Vacancies, a web-based application form, and instructions are available at www.chra.eur.army.mil through May 12, or send via email to Summerhire_Resumes@cpoeur.army.mil or mail to: CHRA, CPOC Europe Region ATTN: Summer Hire Program Unit 29150 APO, AE 09100.

Eagle Scouts invited

The U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, is inviting all Eagle Scouts, both youth and adult, and their guests living in Charlemagne Boy Scout District for a reception at his home May 19 from 7 to 9 p.m. to honor all youth Eagles.

For more information, please call 361-5762 or email shapeav8r@earthlink.net.

Command honors K-9s

By J.D. Hardesty
Meteor-Heraut Editor

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux's military working dogs received Army Achievement medals April 10 at the Chièvres Air Base K9 Kennel to honor their service to the community and the nation.

The awards ceremony was part of the dedication to the \$350,000 K-9 Kennel completed in 2004.

The USAG Benelux Military Police team with their dogs to provide security for local NATO missions as well as hot spots across Southwest Asia and Africa.

"Military working dogs are constantly growing in importance in today's Army and have played a significant role in modern history," said Lt. Col. John G. Romero, commander Chièvres Garrison and deputy USAG Benelux commander. "Day after day, the dogs contribute to our security and safety and therefore, deserve to have this top class kennel."

With dogs and handlers standing side-by-side, much the way partner to conduct security operations, three, four-legged canines stationed in Chièvres - Basco, Blacky and Chyan - were awarded their medals by Romero for "exceptional meritorious service while performing as patrol and explosive detector dogs in countless missions throughout the Benelux as well as in support to USAREUR missions while deployed to either Djibouti, Africa; Eskan Village, Saudi Arabia; or the Horn of Africa."

One dog handler and his partner were on their way back to the Benelux from Afghanistan and were unable to



PHOTO: Courtesy of Staff Sgt. Jose A. Nunez
Staff Sgt. Jose A. Nunez and his dog Ajax provided force protection support while serving in Afghanistan. Besides protecting downrange Soldiers serving in harm's way, Nunez and his partner also provided security to such dignitaries as President George W. Bush.

attend the dedication and awards ceremony.

Staff Sgt. Jose A. Nunez and his dog Ajax provided force protection support for the past six months while serving in Afghanistan.

"All four of the bomb detection and patrol dogs are not only great assets to the USAG Benelux for protection program, they are also valuable assets while providing support to SHAPE, NATO and USAREUR missions,"

Romero said. "These dogs, along with their handlers, are deployed to support the war on terror, helping to safeguard military bases and activities and to detect bombs and other explosives before they inflict harm."

Besides protecting downrange Soldiers serving in harm's way, Nunez and his partner also provided security to such dignitaries as President George W. Bush and other state and department of defense personnel.

Nunez and Ajax are not the only Directorate of Emergency Services partners to rotate downrange from the Benelux.

Sgt. Michael Racy and his partner Chyan have deployed twice in support of NATO missions while working for the Benelux's Directorate of Emergency Services.

Military working dogs clawed a security niche by accident. Originally, Soldiers took their pets with them during the Civil War. Soon, Union and Confederate Soldiers' dogs were serving as sentries while others were quickly trained to perform a variety of other functions.

From their Civil War start cutting their teeth as sentries for the troops to serving as scouts in World War I dogs have played an increasingly important roll in defense of the nation.

According to Romero, more than 10,000 specially trained working dogs deployed during World War II as sentries, messengers and mine detectors.

Man's best friend continues to deploy with their handlers serving today in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Members of the Chièvres Garrison community came out early to promote National Pet Week May 7-13. The 79th Veterinary Detachment is holding an essay contest for students grades 3 through 8 in support of National Pet Week. Cash prizes will be awarded to the writers of winning essays. The American Veterinary Medical Association has chosen "Fitness Unleashed" as this year's contest theme. Physical fitness is as important to pets as it is to people. Essays must be original and between 30 and 250 words. Deadline for submission is May 4. For more information on the essay theme and rules as well as entry forms contact the Veterinary Clinic on Caserne Daumerie (Bldg. No. 70010) or call 361-5733.

USAG Schinnen...serving the tri-border community

Creative thinking wins kids trip to U.S.

By LaDonna Davis
Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Children ranging in ages 10-12 from the AFNORTH International School (AIS) located in Brunssum used their creative thinking skills to earn a spot in this year's world finals of the Odyssey of the Mind competition to take place in the United States May 24-27.

Charlotte Wall, 10; Tavares Holmes, 11; Sara Esser, 12; Teresa Muldoon, 11; Grace Jannotta, 10 and Jared Goodman, 11; compose the group of students from AIS who will be competing in the final competition to take place at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

Odyssey of the Mind is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten

through college. Kids apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of

teams from throughout the U.S. and from about 25 other countries participate in the program.

In order to make it to the finals, the students had to use team work to problem solve their way through a variety of challenges at the local and state levels. Something that the team admits to not always being the best at.

"We're not always that great at team work, sometimes we fight and disagree, which can be a real problem sometimes because of the time limit that we have," said Muldoon. "But it was still fun to work together."

The competition consist of several categories of problems and challenges that each team has to tackle, some of which included hav-

See Odyssey, page7



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

(From left to right) Tavares Holmes, Sara Esser, Charlotte Wall, Teresa Muldoon, and Grace Jannotta pose with a handmade supporting character of their group written play. The team won a trip to the 2006 World Finals Odyssey of the Mind competition to take place at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa May 24-27.

literary classics. They then bring their solutions to competition on the local, state, and world level. Thousands of

Egg hunting brings tri-border families together

By LaDonna Davis
Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Young children, adults and families gathered for a day of fun, food and activities at the tri-border Easter egg hunt held at the JFC Brunssum Sports Field April 8.

This marks the 10th anniversary for the Easter egg hunt which offers children of all ages an assortment of activities including face painting, mini sport car and train car rides, a large bouncy slide, egg decorating, pictures with the Easter Bunny and more.

"The goal of the event is to really bring families together so they can enjoy a day of fun," said Peter Iedema, the youth service facility director and organizer of the event.

It's hard to imagine that this large event, which can bring a crowd of 1,000 people or more each year, started out as just a small venture of which, only U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen took part. But as the years have gone by, according to Iedema, interest and participation has grown and the Easter egg hunt has now turned into a community tradition where families from all different nations across the tri-border community come out and mingle with other families in a relaxing and fun atmosphere.

"In the beginning it was only Schinnen who did the event and then more people got involved which lead to more ideas, and more funding and more help," says Iedema. "It's really become a community thing and each year more and more people want to participate...it's a really great thing."

The event started out with a free pancake breakfast for early risers and continued on well into the afternoon with plenty of popcorn, candy, hamburgers, hotdogs, cotton candy and other sweet treats to keep everyone full.

But even with all the goodies and activities surrounding



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

A young girl counts the Easter eggs in her basket after the tri-border Easter egg hunt at the JFC Brunssum Sports Field April 8.

the event, the main attraction still remains the actual Easter egg hunt for most families and children.

"My daughter just turned two, so it's pretty funny to watch her run out and grasp the concept of how to collect the eggs," says Carey Hicks, whose husband works at the NATO Air Base in Geilenkirchen. "This is really a great event because it brings families out and gives you a chance to talk and interact outside of a work environment."

For some families, like Andrew Typer, who works in Brunssum and is a native of Poland, participating in the Easter egg hunt isn't just a new adventure for his five-year-old daughter, but a new adventure for his entire family.

"It's really nice to be here with my daughter, she was really excited to be here this morning" said Typer. "In Poland we don't have anything like this, so this is really something new and exciting for my family to participate in."

As for the children, they have one goal, and one goal only when trying to find eggs, and that's to get the good stuff.

"I like the Easter egg hunt because you can get a lot of eggs with candy and sometimes win prizes," said seven-year-old Amanda MacCauley who is a two-year veteran of the tri-border egg hunt.

Even though the event takes months and months of planning (three months to be exact) for Iedema, it's all worth it in the end.

"The best part is seeing the kids have fun and smiling," he said. "The combination of all the activities combined with the different nationalities that work together and come together really make this event special and worthwhile. I'm really pleased with all the people that came out this year; it was really a good team effort."

Media training gives Soldiers new perspective

By LaDonna Davis
Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Soldiers who may be deployed were given training on how to interact with media while down range during a media briefing March 29 at the Joint Forces Command, Brunssum.

The media training, taught by Laurri Garcia, public affairs officer for U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen, gave the Soldiers tips on what is and what isn't acceptable to say when faced with media, how to deliver key messages, and the types of messages they should say when talking to media- whether it be in a press conference or a one-on-one interview.

"Once you have the opportunity to present yourself to the media, you are the best spokesperson for the Army," said Garcia during her briefing to the Soldiers in attendance. "You tell it better than anybody else because you live it, you breathe it, it's part of your life and you are the best representative this country could have to talk about what you do."

Due to an increase in embedded media during wartime, it is a necessity that all Soldiers be trained on how to talk to reporters. Media training gives Soldiers the tools they need to tell their story and tell it well so that the American people at home as well as the international community will be able to hear the truth straight from the source.

"Much of the public's high opinion of the Army comes from press accounts, so whether the coverage is good or bad if Soldiers are to maintain the trust and confidence of the American people they must understand the communications process and understand that the media is also a tool for Soldiers to tell their story," said Garcia. "Interviews are opportunities to correct the record, answer critics and praise outstanding performance. No one tells the Army story better than a Soldier."

All of the Soldiers in the class were given examples of poor interview techniques, and good interview techniques and were given useful tips on how to conduct themselves when faced with a camera and microphone in their face.

To some of the Soldiers, the training not only gave a new outlook on the media's role in the war, but also gave them a new perspective on the Soldiers role in the media.

See Media Training, page7



USAG Brussels...serving the tri-mission community

Army Family Action Plan

Community teamwork to improve tri-mission

By Isabelle Gillet

Brussels ACS Program Analyst

Brussels Army Community Service hosted the annual Army Family Action Plan Forum March 14-15 at the U.S. Army Garrison Brussels.

Twenty adult delegates, representing a cross-section of the USAG Brussels population divided into three topical working groups (family support, consumer services, and joint community), gathered to analyze and fine-tune 32 issues that had been pre-submitted by community members before the forum began.

Brig. Gen. John Adams, deputy U.S. Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee and community coordinator for the Brussels Military Community, opened the forum and hailed delegates for their commitment to improving quality of life in the Brussels Community.

Facilitators, recorders/transcribers, issue support personnel, volunteer conference assistants, and community delegates had received comprehensive training prior to the event on everyone's role, conference process, group dynamics, issue development, and previous success stories.

The working groups' composition had been balanced according to the demographics of the different units and agencies that make up the "uniqueness" of the Brussels community.

Delegates were from the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and representing either the USAG Brussels, U.S. Embassy, U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels American School, NATO Health Clinic, and NATO International Military Staff.

Observers from USAG Benelux and the Canadian Military Family Resource Center were on site to watch proceedings as each group prioritized its top three issues and recommendations, as well as, to vote for the three most improved services in the Brussels community since last year's AFAP, the four most valuable services the military provides, and the six most critical active AFAP issues at Headquarters, Department of the Army.

In addition, a youth group session, coordinated by Child & Youth Services, was held prior to the AFAP Forum.

A panel of seven youth representatives voiced their specific concerns and ideas on improving the quality of life in the Brussels community.

Forum participants received a Certificate of Appreciation from Lt. Col. Patrick Kilroy in recognition of their contribution. Updates on AFAP issues will be addressed throughout the year.

Top issues and recommendations submitted by each working group at the Brussels Community AFAP Forum include:

Issues from the Middle School/Teen Group:

- Movie and Pizza Nights at CYS by Age Group
- Middle School Teen (MST) Center at BAS
- Open Microphone Night (Improvisation) at 3-Star Lounge for Youth

Issues from the Consumer Services Group:

- Nutrition at Brussels American School (BAS)



PHOTO: Courtesy Brussels ACS

Members of the joint community group discuss how to improve joint Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation services at U.S. Army Garrison Brussels during the Army Family Action Plan March 14-15 held at the communities Three-Star Lounge. Four groups with representatives from the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels American School, NATO Health Clinic and NATO International Military Staff discussed issues and possible recommendations before selecting what is the most important to the tri-mission area to send to its higher headquarters, U.S. Army Garrison Benelux.

- Availability of Commissary Items
- Employee lunch breaks

Issues from the Joint Community Group:

- Joint MWR Services at USAG Brussels
- Foreign Affairs dependents enrolling at BAS
- American citizens employed by the U.S. Government and USAREUR privileges

Issues from the Family Support Group:

- Child Care
- Parking Garage Entrance
- Facility Enhancement

Community delegates also voted for the top three most improved services in Brussels since the 2005 AFAP and gave the reasons why they noted such improvement. Results are as follows:

1: Special Events, because of their efforts in improving their programming and outreach since last year.

2: Multi-Craft Center, because of the increase in both their programs and their visibility. They offer more courses on more crafts with more supplies, and they cater more for children.

3: Fitness Center, because they upgraded the showers, they have more fitness classes with good equipment, the overall organization has improved, they have adjusted their hours of operation, and they have personalized fitness programs available.

(Note: This is the second consecutive year Special Events was voted one of the three most improved services in the Brussels community.)

Community delegates voted for the top four most valuable services the military provides and gave reasons why they value those services. Results are as follows:

1: APO, because the contact with the United States is easily available; they are more reliable, cheaper, and with "less hassle".

2: BAS, because of the United States education standards they provide, the cultural and safety aspects, small classes, the familiarity with peers, the integration within the host nation, and their high quality teachers.

3: AAFES, because it provides U.S. products for cheap prices, has an online catalog, and is convenient as far as hours and language.

4: NATO Health & Dental Clinics, because of its convenience – there is no language barrier with the U.S. doctors, they're familiar with U.S. standards of health care, they have a good and prompt staff, they have quality dental service, and they keep the community informed.

(Note: This is the second year in a row that APO, BAS, and AAFES have been voted for among the Four Most Valuable Services that the Military provides.)

Lean Six Sigma

Army learning to do more with less

HEIDELBERG, Germany – More than 250 members of the United States Army, Europe got a peek at the future of doing business in the Army during a Lean Six Sigma overview here April 7.

Lean Six Sigma is a significant part of the Army's business transformation initiative, supporting improvements across all major commands and functions. Those goals, the Army's top priorities, were spelled out in an October 2005 memo from the Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker.

They are; to win the long war while sustaining the all-volunteer force, accelerate the future combat force strategy, and accelerate business transformation and process improvement.

"Everything the Army does must align with the strategic goals as defined by the Army leadership," said Joseph W. Albright, director for enterprise solutions for the office of the deputy undersecretary of the army for business transformation, during the brief.

The goal of process improvement and business transformation will use Lean Six Sigma, a synergy of two concepts. Lean is primarily concerned with eliminating waste and improving flow in business operations, according to Elizabeth Beatty, USAREUR G-8, Office of the Comptroller.

Six Sigma is a method to reduce variance in the quality and speed of services and products. The combined process encourages people to think critically about what they do and how they do it, Albright said.

Michael A. Kirby, deputy undersecretary of the Army for business transformation, described LSS as a tool to help get the right people, on the right problems, with the right metrics, and the right leadership to bring problems to a successful conclusion. "Lean Six Sigma is a proven business practice to solve complex problems, breaking these problems down into discrete processes, and focusing on end results," Kirby said.

"We are employing this to make the Army more capable of generating the combat power the nation requires," Kirby added. "USAREUR is a key part of this roll-out."



The near-term targeted processes LSS will address include; property management, contracting, civilian human resources, military construction, reimbursable repair funding, information technology portfolio management, personal security investigations, planning and mobilization, military recruiting, and medical capabilities.

The Lean Six Sigma system is not new, said Beatty. "It defines, measures, analyzes, improves and controls any process yield by following a problem-solving approach using statistical tools. Used together, they can result in significant cost avoidance and savings for any organization."

"The methodologies have proven over the last 20 years that it is possible to achieve dramatic and positive results in cost, quality, and time by focusing on process improvement," Beatty said.

According to Albright, the senior Army leadership is convinced of its worth and are hands-on involved and committed to change.

"We know the Army is effective, we win wars and get the job done," said Jack Van Den Beldt, USAREUR Lean Six Sigma deployment manager. "Effective does not always mean efficient. That is why we are introducing LSS, to become better stewards of taxpayer dollars."

"I think the entire force needs to look at this as an opportunity for achieving efficiency in business," said Lt. Col. Dave Fulton, USAREUR G-1, Office of Personnel. "It's going to require professional development to develop a culture of continuous improvement."

Lean was developed by Toyota based upon the efficiency theories of statistician, Dr. W. Edwards Deming. Six Sigma is a system developed by Motorola to reduce variance in quality and speed.

For more information on Lean Six Sigma, visit the Department of the Undersecretary of the Army website, <http://www.army.mil/aeioo/cpi/tools.htm>, or the Continuous Process Improvement website, <http://www.army.mil/aeioo/cpi/>.

Odyssey ... Continued from page 5

ing to build a structure out of obscure items like toothpicks and clay, answer ambiguous questions such as 'what would you find in a box of happiness?', and even having to act out an entire play where the script and the supporting characters are created solely from the team's imagination.

"The competition really forces us to think outside the box," said Holmes.

"We just had to throw our ideas out on the table and put them all together," Esser concluded.

To the students though, it wasn't the problems that are the most challenging aspect of the competition, it's the competition itself.

Per the rules, the children have to compete in the highest division which the team qualifies. Since one of the team members is in the sixth grade, that meant that the entire group has to compete with middle schoolers. Something that Jannotta, one of the youngest members on the team, finds a little nerve-racking.

"It's scary having to compete with middle school kids; they're so much bigger than us" said Jannotta.

But even though competing against older children can be intimidating at times, it still wasn't their biggest challenge.

One of the things that make the Odyssey of the Mind competition so unique is the fact that all of the students have to figure out the problems on their own with no teacher or adult help; and for the two sponsors of the AIS team, this proved to create a challenge for them that they didn't anticipate.

"It was very hard to stand back and watch the kids figure the problems out," said Judy Hurston, a teacher and sponsor of the group. "But, I think the most important thing the kids learned was that they could, in fact, come up with things on their own, work on their own, plan things on their own and be really self-reliant without adults telling them all the time what to do and how to do it."

Sandra Griffin, also a teacher and team sponsor, agrees.

"As a teacher, you do some of the opposite and help your students when they're struggling, so to stand and watch them struggle was hard," Griffin admits. "Yet it was neat to know that they had to figure it out completely on their own."

The students all admit to being very excited to be going to Iowa and admit to even being a little scared and timid, but in the end, they all agree that this competition has taught them lessons that they will be able to use all throughout their lives.

"My mom has to work with a whole team to organize paperwork and get things done at her job, and if you're an independent person you can't really work together as a team," said Wall. "So, I think the most important thing we've learned is how to work together as a team, it can really help you with your job when you get older."

Media Training ... Continued from page 5

"This training has really opened my eyes to a new perspective of how we treat the media when in a deployed situation," admits 1st Lt. Malia Kekuewa. "In college we were taught to say 'no comment' to media personnel that approached us when we were doing missions, and now, after listening to Garcia's brief, I feel like it's a totally new concept to put out your message, the Army's message and put the Army in a positive light. So you can talk to the media versus to say no comment and get the Army's story out."

"In this era of 24/7 news coverage it is not a matter of if a Soldier will be interviewed, but when," said Garcia. "Soldiers are the Army's best communicators and who better to address issues regarding Army life than them. If they wear it, operate it, promote it or shoot it, no one can talk about it better than a Soldier and ensuring they have the skills and the confidence to do so promotes an environment of open communications."



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Laurri Garcia, public affairs officer for USAG Schinnen (standing), gives media training march 29 to Soldiers facing deployment.



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